At least 42 biographies of José Martí have been written and published in Spanish or English during the 20th and 21st centuries. Among them all, Manach’s *Martí, el Apóstol* (1933) is unquestionably the one that has had the most widespread and enduring impact. Though rejected on the island during the initial years of the Castro era, it was eventually espoused even by leading *martianos* of the Castro Revolution such as Luis Toledo Sande, himself the author of a Martí biography. What is it about Mañach’s biography that accounts for this longstanding primacy, and what does that mean for our understanding of Martí?

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